

colleagues and I will be offering in the several days ahead.

The first amendment I intend to offer is the 25x25 resolution, which establishes a national goal of producing 25 percent of America's energy from renewable sources, like solar, wind, geothermal, and biomass, by 2025. That resolution is a vision for where we want to get as Americans. It is sponsored by a great group of bipartisan Senators, including Senators GRASSLEY, HAGEL, HARKIN, LUGAR, OBAMA, and the Presiding Officer, Senator TESTER. That legislation was introduced earlier this year as S. Con. Res. 3, and it has received widespread backing. It is endorsed by 22 current and former Governors and many general assemblies from across the country. Nearly 400 organizations, from the Farm Bureau and the Union of Concerned Scientists, to John Deere, to the Natural Resources Defense Council, have embraced 25x25 and the vision incorporated in that amendment. I hope we can include that in this legislation.

The second amendment, which I will mention briefly, incorporates provisions from S. 339, the DRIVE Act. That is legislation which Senators BAYH, LIEBERMAN, BROWNBACK, SESSIONS, and 23 other Senators have been working on for a long time. It has a robust mandatory oil savings plan. The DRIVE Act aims to increase our Nation's energy security by cutting 2.5 million barrels per day from our Nation's oil use by 2016, and 10 million barrels per day from its oil use by 2031. I am hopeful these provisions will also be added to the bill.

Third, Senator BINGAMAN and I and others will be introducing an amendment to create a national renewable energy standard. Many States, such as Colorado, already have a renewable energy standard and are reaping the benefits. I know there will be debate and discussion about how exactly we move forward with the renewable energy standard. But I believe the time has come for our Nation to adopt a renewable energy standard in the same way many States have done, including my State of Colorado.

For example, a renewable energy standard of 20 percent by 2020 will reduce emissions of carbon dioxide by an estimated 400 million tons per year. That is equal to taking 71 million cars off of America's roads, or planting 104 million acres of trees. While we look at this renewable energy standard, I know we will have a debate about whether we can improve upon what we have done here. I look forward to that debate.

Finally, the Presiding Officer, Senator TESTER, from Montana, and I will be introducing an amendment to make better use of America's vast coal resources. Coal is to the United States what oil is to Saudi Arabia. The vast resource of coal from the great States of Montana, Colorado, Wyoming, West Virginia, and throughout our country, is something we need to use. But as we use our coal resources, we need to

make sure we are using them in a smart way so it doesn't damage our environment.

The amendment we will introduce will provide loan guarantees to build coal gasification facilities. We also will have standards in there with respect to life cycle greenhouse gas emissions from those facilities to make sure they are 20 percent lower than emissions from petroleum fuels. I appreciate the great work of my colleagues who have worked on that amendment.

How we improve our energy security and reduce our dependence upon foreign oil is the central national security, economic security, and environmental security challenge of the 21st century. It will determine whether we will continue to be entrenched in conflicts over resources in every corner of the world. It will determine whether we will triumph in our fight against oil-funded extremists and terrorists. It will determine whether our economic fortunes will hinge on the price of oil that OPEC sets, or whether the United States will stand proudly and independently as the world's innovator for clean energy technologies; and it will determine whether we will succeed in leaving our children and grandchildren a world wrought with environmental dangers, or whether we can correct our path in time.

I thank my colleagues for their great work on this bill, and I look forward to a productive and thoughtful debate and a successful conclusion to energy legislation in the days and 2 weeks ahead.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from Colorado for his courtesy in arranging for me to speak next. The Senator from Colorado and I and the Senator from New Mexico, Mr. BINGAMAN, who is here, the chairman of the Energy Committee, Senator DOMENICI, the ranking member, and Senator LIEBERMAN, who has already spoken, were at breakfast this morning at our usual Tuesday morning bipartisan breakfast. And Senator BINGAMAN expressed the hope, as I am sure he will on the Senate floor when he speaks, that we can make the kind of progress this year that we made 2 years ago on the Energy bill. And I hope so too.

He talked about how difficult it was and how impressive it was for four committees, plus the Finance Committee, all to make a contribution and how we might be able to make progress with alternative fuels, with energy efficiency. The more we learn about energy efficiency, such as with appliances and lighting, and the more we can do in accelerating research on how to recapture carbon, the better off we will be.

Earlier this morning, Senator LIEBERMAN of Connecticut said in that spirit of bipartisanship that he hoped one amendment would not be added to this bill, and that would be an amendment calling for the drilling for oil in

the Alaska wildlife area. That is a controversial piece of legislation.

I want to make a similar suggestion in the spirit of bipartisanship. I note my friend from New Mexico is on the Senate floor, and I hope the Senate would not agree to and maybe we would not even have to debate, the amendment that Senator BINGAMAN offered before in the last Congress and which he plans to offer again which would require a 15-percent so-called renewable portfolio standard in every State. I wish to spend a few minutes this morning talking about why I believe it is important that we not adopt that amendment.

I am reminded of a story about a Tennessee mountaineer who was convicted of murder, and the judge sentenced him and told him his choice was to be hanged or be shot.

The defendant thought a minute and said: May I ask a question, judge?

The judge said: Of course.

My question is, Do I have another choice?

Mr. President, we Tennesseans feel the same way about Senator BINGAMAN's proposed renewable portfolio standard which would require us to make 15 percent of our electricity from renewable fuels, mostly wind power. That would raise our taxes, it would raise our electric rates, it would run away jobs, and it would ruin our mountaintops. That is not the kind of choice we like to have.

Forcing Tennesseans to build 40-story wind turbines on our pristine mountaintops or pay billions of dollars in penalty taxes to the Federal Government amounts to a judge giving a defendant the choice of being hanged or shot.

In Tennessee, the wind simply doesn't blow enough to produce much electric power. Residential homeowners cannot afford these new taxes, industries will take their jobs to States with cheaper power, and tourists will spend their dollars where they can see the mountaintops instead of giant wind turbines.

There is, in this case, a better choice, fortunately, and that choice is for clean, reasonably priced energy in the Tennessee Valley from conservation and efficiency, from nuclear reactors—a new one of which just opened within the last few weeks in our region by TVA—and by clean coal. Because of its nuclear and hydro plants, Tennessee is already on the honor roll, ranking 16th among States in production of carbon-free electricity. But we are one of 27 States that would not meet the standards under Senator BINGAMAN's amendment, which he expects to offer during this debate.

This is real money. The Tennessee Valley Authority suggests that by the last year that this new standard is in effect, it would cost Tennesseans at least 410 million new dollars a year.

What could we do with that kind of money? If the goal were clean air, we could give away 205 million in \$2 fluorescent lightbulbs per year, producing